[For ceremonies that initiate the Masai youth into the status of both legal majority and adulthood see category 561.]

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
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claim to belong to them live elsewhere. Merker gives as the principal divisions three provinces, Kisongo, Loita, and Ol-lenguse. This is perhaps not according to Masai traditions, but is not incorrect as a practical description of the present distribution of the tribe. The Loita and Ol-lenguse, also known as Ellenguse and Purko, are both subdivisions of the Kisongo district, of whom the former acquired importance by refusing to accept the present Laibon, Lenana, and following instead his brother Sendeyo. Besides these districts, there are four clans representing genealogical not territorial divisions: Aiser, Matapato, Mokonos, and Molelyan. The Aiser seem to enjoy a certain primacy. The medicine men all belong to this clan, which is specially connected with Mount Ngong (to the south of Kibwezi), also called Ol-doinyo-lo-'l-Aiser, the mountain of the Aiser.

According to the social system of the pastoral Masai the male sex is divided into boys, warriors, and elders. The first stage continues until circumcision, which may be performed any time between thirteen and seventeen, or sometimes in the case of poor people not till twenty. Those who are circumcised about the same time (see p. xlv for details) are said to belong to the same age, and are known collectively by a distinctive name, such as 'the White Swords' or 'the Invincibles.' After circumcision the warriors plait their hair, but, except for a small skin hanging over the shoulders, and their arms and ornaments (which are described by Mr. Hollis), go absolutely naked. They subsist entirely on meat, milk, and blood, and in particular may not smoke or touch intoxicants. They do not live with the married people, but in separate kraals with the immature unmarried girls, with whom they are allowed to cohabit freely. Tradition[1] (see p. xvii) ascribes this practice to the fear that if girls were kept away from the society of their own warriors, they would let themselves be seduced by the enemy; but the remedy has been worse than the danger it was to avoid. The direct physical evil is considerable, and is partly responsible for the diminishing numbers of the race. Besides this, female morality after such a girlhood was naturally low, even when the Masai kept to themselves. Now that they have come into contact with civilization, prostitution and venereal disease have become deplorably frequent. About the age of twenty-seven or thirty, or nowadays when raiding is forbidden somewhat earlier, a warrior marries and settles down. If he

[1] It is said that among the Nandi, Suk, and Turkana there are similar customs of free love.

1: Hollis C-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
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is a man of wealth and importance he may be elected chief, in which case he is responsible for the discipline of the warriors and their appearance when summoned to fight, though he does not go to the wars himself. As with most East African tribes an elder's ideal of existence seems to be ease, not unmixed with drunkenness. Proverb No. 6a (p. 149), 'Don't lie with your feet against a post like the father of many sons,' meaning 'Don't give yourself airs,' is a vivid picture of the Masai polygamous family taking his ease in the primitive posture of lying on his back with his feet against a post, while his family do all the work for him.

Masai women, unlike the men, are carefully dressed in leather garments, but a rare, and according to our ideas most unbecoming, custom forces them to shave their heads. Before marriage they are circumcised, and signalize their change of state by wearing large circular earrings and necklaces of brass and iron wire. Both girls and women have their legs and arms covered in iron ornaments, so that they can sometimes hardly walk.

This military organization of the Masai made them a most effective body for destructive military operations, and explains not only the predominant position which they acquired in East Africa, but also the respect which they inspired and the extent to which their customs were imitated by other tribes. On the other hand, it probably also is the reason why they never founded any state or polity analogous to the kingdoms of Uganda and Unyoro. The centre of political gravity was not with the elders or chiefs, but with a republic of young men, governed by ideas of military conformity and desirous only of military glory. Retirement from this band of warriors as a chief was honourable, but seems to have been considered as a removal to an inferior sphere of activity. The chiefs arranged the details of the raids which the warriors wished to undertake, but their power of compelling them to do anything which they did not wish was very slight.

The nearest approach to a central and superior authority among the Masai is the mythical race of Laibon (more correctly Ol-oiboni; see p. 370, &c.). They all belong to the Kidongi family of the Ainer clan, and are said to be descended from a personage called Ol-le-Mwenya, who came down from heaven and was found by the Ainer sitting on the top of Mount Ngong. This was nine generations ago, the genealogy having been preserved. The influence of the

[1] The chief is elected from the warriors, but leaves their ranks at once and becomes an elder.

Z:\Bernardi E, M-4 (no date) 1955 FL12 Masai FL12

the warriors with milk. This seems to be the feast that Merker refers to as "the feast of the circumcised boys – *el ogor lel eljok enarak*". The newly circumcised remain in his mother's house until the wound is healed.

c) At this stage all the newly circumcised assemble from the various villages, they form small bands and go around shooting at small birds with special small bows and arrows. They wear women's clothes, women's ear-decorations (and also by elders) and a special headdress to which they append the birds they kill. During this period they are called *ar olubilo*, pl. *i-olubilo* – the recluse, and are under strict regulations: At evening they must return home and enter the village before the cattle. They must not drink blood or eat meat or touch it with their hands. They must not wash. They must avoid girls. They must not fight with, or be struck by, any other: if this happens, milk must be put on their heads. They must not go out in the daytime without their special headdress.

The period of segregation may last for some months. At the end by order of the elders they are shaved by their mothers (hence they are called the shaved ones – *el kerunyi* pl. *il kerunyi*) and presented by their fathers with the arms of the warriors, a spear, a sword and a shield. It is a peculiar distinction of the initiates to let their hair grow and to twist it into a pigtail of which they are very proud. [1] At this later stage the initiates will be called *el murani*, pl. *il muran*, i. e. those who have been circumcised.

It is generally stated, and apparently even by the Masai themselves, that an uncut or a youth is circumcised to become a man. The evidence shows clearly that the expression "becomes a man" does not describe the real social status of a newly circumcised. Even if the statement is taken to mean that through circumcision a boy has attained the status of a man, and therefore is entitled to full participation in Masai social life, the statement is at variance with the evidence. As a matter of fact no Masai is allowed to marry even after circumcision. In order to marry he must be at least a senior *ntilikin*, i. e. a member of the senior age-unit. [2] A newly circumcised (i. e. a junior, and to some extent also a senior initiate) may

[1] On this particular custom, cf. Merker, l. c., p. 149; Hollis, in *J. R. A. I.*, 1905, v. 35, pp. 49 ff.

[2] The seniority of the age units is discussed in the next paragraph. With reference to the text above we note that even when a senior initiate marries, he is not allowed to beget children, as this is the privilege of the elders. See below, chapter VIII and Fig. 1.

2: Bernardi E, M-4 (no date) 1955 FL12 Masai FL12

not possess cattle of his own (cattle are the property of his father), and therefore he cannot form his own family which would not help it. He may not eat meat in public; he may not drink milk on his own, but only with some of his age-unit mates; he is expected to live in a special segregated village; and as a member of the age unit, he is, individually as well as corporately, under the social and political authority of the elders. Finally, from the military point of view, although he is allowed to take part in raids or other police action, he is still considered a learner and is expected to accompany the senior initiated in order to be trained properly.

The expression, thus, "becomes a man" is merely an anticipation of a status not yet attained but towards which the first approval step has been taken.

Individual initiation causes a boy to become a full member of an age-unit, and thereby he is introduced into the active and governing sections of society. Indeed, in the present cultural situation of the Masai, circumcision is the main ceremony of individual initiation, and is the essential requirement for unit and class membership. However, the initiate's membership into a definite unit or class derives primarily not from his individual initiation, but from the initiation being performed during the period for the initiation of that unit or class. It is, therefore, from finding himself within a definite period that a Masai initiate obtains a definite place in the structure of his own society. Indeed, this structural effect of time on the initiate is the essential point of the age-system as a phenomenon relevant to social structure. [9]

V – THE AGE-UNITS AND THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP [10]

The two age-units of a class are called respectively "the right-hand circumcision" (*nwarata olatoni*) and the "left-hand circumcision" (*nwarata olodiyoni*). These two units are instituted in turn, in succession of time, 'the right-hand' first, 'the left-hand' second. That succession is usually expressed in terms of seniority, as we see below.

Each age-unit, however, is further subdivided. These subdivisions are formed by all those who have been individually initiated

[9] Bernardi, p. 196, on structural time, and pp. 201 s. on structural precursor and structural permanence.

[10] Hollis, l. c., p. 79; Merker, *The Masai*, Oxford 1910, p. 241; Lamphear, l. c., p. 107; Fox, *Further notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony*, l. c., pp. 209 ss.; 213 ss., pp. 11 ss.; Fosbrooke, l. c., pp. 30 s.

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from the senior moran ". To these, according to KRAPF, p. 82, should be added the formation of the initiates' segregated village (manyatta).[*]

The behaviour set up by seniority relationship is one of open rivalry between the two adjacent units. Members of the senior unit look down with contempt on those of the junior unit and the latter retaliate as best as they can. The conflicts and clashes which ensue seem to be accepted as a normal social institution and in fact they are looked upon with favour.

FOSBROOKE,[**] notes that initiates make no formal demand for the above mentioned privileges of seniority. " The juniors ", he writes, " will assume one of the privileges, and when met by a band of seniors will promptly be beaten up and retreat. This process continues till wounds become frequent in these affrays. When the seniors feel that they are on the point of losing their ascendancy, they graciously hand over these privileges to the juniors, who may then proceed to the Ouote ceremony ". A detailed description of the same process is given by KRAPF.[***]

The claim for the privileges of seniority and the Ouote ceremony mark the final stage of the official period for performing individual initiations and therefore for instituting the age-unit. There is a certain regular interval between these ceremonies, which our authorities try to estimate in terms of years. It seems, however, that the deciding factors are, the adjustment between the senior and junior initiates, the former handing over the privileges of seniority to the latter, and the agreement of the given elders that the proper time has come for closing the age-unit period.

VI — THE FINAL INSTITUTION OF THE AGE-UNIT[*]

The final institution of the age-unit is brought about by the performance of the Ouote ceremony. This is described by FOSBROOKE,[**] as " the ceremony of promotion from junior to senior

[*] FOSBROOKE in his chart, p. 94, puts this immediately following the period of the individual initiation (circumcision) of each unit.

[**] FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 96.

[***] KRAPF, l. c., pp. 80 ss.

[*] KRAPF, l. c., pp. 71 s.; HOBLEY, l. c., p. 167; HOLLIS, l. c., pp. 289 ss.; FOSBROOKE, *An Administrative and Political History of the Masai Reserve*, London (1918), pp. 60 ss.; *KAR* 66, p. 9; *TAJ*, 1938, p. 61; LAMBERT, l. c., pp. 186 ss.; FOX, l. c., pp. 401 s.; WOODHOUSE, l. c., pp. 189 ss.; *TAJ*, 1938, pp. 60 s.; FOSBROOKE, l. c., pp. 89 s.

[**] FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 96.

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warriorhood ". He also states that *Ureto* " is probably the best known and most misconstrued ceremony in the Masai age-grade system ".

Ureto is not performed at a single place for whole Masailand, but in every territorial section or group of sections. [1] It consists of three main stage: (a) a testing of the candidates by the elders; (b) the election of the ceremonial leader of the unit; (c) a sacrifice of a bull.

a) The first stage takes place in a special hut called *singira*. [2] Not all the candidates, i. e., junior initiates, are allowed into the *singira*, but only those who have kept the sexual regulations which bind junior initiates. In order that no one may enter the *singira* under false pretences the entrance is bewitched by the elders. According to LEAKEY, [3] another test is performed inside the hut aiming at detecting those who have entered surreptitiously.

In the annual report of the *D.C.D.*, [4] we read that every candidate is expected to give " an account " of his past life. " The importance of the *E-Ureto* " states the same report, " lies in the fact that it imposes an obligation upon a warrior who has disgraced himself in any way to clear himself of the stigma before he can marry and settle down as a respected Elder of the tribe ". " The *O-Singira* " says FOX, [5] " gives the warriors permission to have sexual relations with initiated women ".

b) The nomination of the ceremonial leader (*ol oononi*, pl. *il oonok*, or *ol otonu*) takes place inside the *singira* hut. The elders

[1] LEAKEY's statement, p. 184, that at the *Ureto* " all the members of a given group (i. e., age-unit) from the whole of the Masai country, north, south, east and west are required to be present " is emphatically denied by FOX, p. 660, and FOSBROOKE, p. 28. According to FOX the following sections perform it: (a) Purko, (b) Loita and Siria, (c) Dorobi, (d) Kisonko, Loitokitok and Matapato, (e) Loitokitok, (f) Kaputei. And FOSBROOKE says that the *Ureto* is celebrated " by sections or groups of sections " and is attended " as many warriors as possible, " but by no means all ". ELLIOTT, on the other's authority, recorded that the *Ureto* was held by the Purko, Kakonyoike, Dalalekutuk and Dorobi on the Kisonyo. The Kaputei, Matapato, Kisonko and other divisions where to select their hut.

[2] There are contradictory descriptions of the *singira*. Some states that it is a 'very big hut'; Some says " not so big "; Some " small "; Leakey and Fox state respectively " an enormous ", and a " very large " hut. Probably it all depends on the actual number of the initiates involved.

[3] LEAKEY, l. c., p. 186.

[4] *D.C.D.*, p. 31.

[5] FOX, l. c., p. 668.

[4] = annual handwritten = not (1955)

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great political importance, in reply to which the elder initiated that each did not necessarily follow as "we can always tell the bravest what order to give".

c) The sacrifice of a bull is then performed with great ceremonial. HOLLIS,[*] describes the contest in which the candidates compete in getting hold of a horn which was previously thrown into a fire.

With reference to this sacrifice a special officer is appointed. He is called *oburonyoni*; he has a ceremonial status and must prepare the hide-rings from the skin of the bull. He is also described by the author of *MS. 63* as "the official charcoalmaker of the *murran*". His function, however, seems to be limited to Uasin.

Great emphasis is laid by WESTERMANN,[**] on what he calls "the fire-drilling ceremony", which as Fosbrooke also says, "must be first to the seats". The ceremony is described by WHITEHOUSE in connection with the first erection of the segregated village of the initiates or *manyatta*.[***]

The fire is ceremonially lighted by the elders, and it must be carried into the new dwellings of the village. The next morning after this ceremony, the candidates who have become senior initiates are blessed, and prayers to the black God are offered for them.[****]

At the seats, the novices first, and then the other initiates, shave their hair. Pig-tails, however, are again fitted after the ceremony.

Some (four or five) months after the ceremony, when the senior

[*] HOLLIS, l. c., pp. 340 ff.

[**] WESTERMANN, l. c., p. 108.

[***] This circumstance supports STAMPE's statement that one of the privileges demanded by the junior initiates is the building of their own segregated village, l. c., pp. 39 ff.

[****] It is of some interest to reproduce here from WESTERMANN, the prayer recited by the elders on this occasion. It shows clearly how the senior initiates are about to enter the most important stage of their life as members of their society. This is the prayer: " Be trustworthy, Ok, return safely, O God. — Receive ye men out of God. — May the thieves pass you by. — With those who love us their days may feel dry even as their forerunners. — Lenana and Sidai and Mbatian wish the safe return. — Grow up. Become possessor of vast lands. Become as great as the Kikuyuniaro. — Be the fathers of my children, and bring them up well. Have many wives. — May God love you. May the evil of the night guard them. May one age be the heaven". The expression of the first verse "return safely" probably refers to the vast which follows rests. Lenana, Sidai, Mbatian were prophets.

2: Bernardi E, M-4 (no date) 1955 FL12 Masai FL12

initiates have returned from a meat festival (a feast is organized. According to Merker this is called, "the (fulfilment) of the vow" or "the (selection) of the child" (*Ee-o-'e-dorer arukí Ee-o-'eneki*).[49]

The main reason for this raid, is the strong desire of the new senior initiates to show their ability and enjoy the satisfaction of the military efficiency they have reached.

At the *eunto* the age-raid assumes a new name.[50]

Emuto it seen with relation to the social status of the initiates is undoubtedly a promotion ceremony. *Junior* become *senior* initiates. But if we consider the ceremony in connection with the institution of the age-raid, we find that *Emuto* brings together all those who have been individually initiated during previous years. In other words it merges into one body the three minimal divisions, it gives them a corporate status and institutes the age-raid. The performance of individual initiation is not ended with *Emuto*. It still takes place, but irregularly, and all those initiated at this time form the fourth minimal division, *el oimpaa*, as reported by Merker.[51] The ceremony closing the age-raid's legal period for individual initiation is *Eselengore*, which, as we have seen, is performed by the *piron-eldore* of the next age-raid.

Thus the institution of the age-raid is brought about by three different ceremonies, namely, *Empiloto* as the opening ceremony, *Emuto* as the instituting ceremony, and *Eselengore* as the closing ceremony.

The closing value of *Eselengore* is due to the negative aspect of this ceremony as we noted.

The point raised by the interval between all these various ceremonies is most confusing. The reason for this is that the interval is defined by all our authorities in terms which are foreign to Masai age-system. Therefore, we must accept the number of years which they suggest as more or less broad approximations.

[49] "The (fulfilment) of the vow" is not a special term for the raid which follows *emuto*, but is applied to any raid undertaken after a long peace. Cf. Merker, l. c., p. 201, n. 2.

[50] Fox, l. c., p. 108, writes that "the present (1908) age (raid) of Purko warriors was called *Ilnigi* prior to the *Il-Uasin* when they took the name of *Il-Saimati*.

[51] Fosbrooke, l. c., p. 97, speaks of a "hiatus" between the age-raids and we think that such hiatus is that period which runs between the *Emuto* and the *Eselengore* ceremonies.

2: Bernardi E, M-4 (no date) 1955 FL12 Masai FL12

Thereupon we infer that the function of the age-unit is primarily social. Its scope is to organise the initiates into a corporate body, separate and distinct from other similar bodies, and to lead them, both as individuals and as a corporate whole, towards a full social and economic independence and towards taking a full share in political life.[102]

10 - THE CEREMONIES FOR THE INSTITUTION OF THE AGE-CLASS

The institution of the age class is brought about by the performance of some special ceremonies, of which the most important is the eunoto progon. Before this takes place, other ceremonies, such as " the slaughtering of the ox with jumping " (ol gaisa / ol bor), " the eating of milk " and " the eating of meat ", must be performed by every initiate. Through these performances the initiate obtains the status of an elder. The second is the forerunner of all his age-mates. As was said, at Uasin, he is given the status of an elder, and soon after that he settles down as a married man.

Lecoeur,[103] states that a warrior (i. e. an initiate) who marries cannot have sexual intercourse with his initiated wife.[104] Fox,[105] qualifies Lecoeur's statement and says that such a case " is hypothetical, and does not occur in practice ", because usually the senior initiates marry after the eating of milk.

Merker,[106] is our only authority for " the slaughtering of the ox with jumping ". The ceremony consists in a meat festival offered by the candidate to the elders of the neighbourhood of his father's village. Other initiates share the meat, but eat apart being still under the restrictions of junior initiates. A spark fight follows in which the initiates and women take part. Finally before the assembly, " a married man with his chief wife comes near to their host and addresses him with the following words ":

[101] Each unit seems to be distinguished from the other by the peculiar songs. Fox, l. c., p. 400, states that almost all of these songs are in a " certain esoteric language ".

[102] Lecoeur, l. c., p. 288.

[103] Lecoeur was evidently misled in his information, for else where l. c., p. 286, that " the period transits from the junior warrior stage to the Elder's stage takes place without any ceremonial ", which is not correct.

[104] Fox, l. c., p. 400.

[105] Merker, l. c., pp. 190 ff.

6:Thomson K-3 (1883-1884)1887
FL12 Masai FL12

arm. A beaded belt confines it round the waist, leaving only one limb partly exposed. Frequently it is slipped off the shoulder, and depends entirely from the waist, leaving the breast exposed. Their ornaments are of a very remarkable nature. Round the legs from the ankles to the knees telegraph wire is coiled closely in spiral fashion. So awkward is this ornament that the wearer cannot walk properly, she cannot sit down or rise up like any other human being, and she cannot run. Round the arms she has wire similarly coiled both above and below the elbow. Round the neck more iron wire is coiled—in this case, however, lavishly—till the head seems to sit on an inverted iron salver. When the leg-ornaments are once on they must remain till finally taken off, as it requires many days of painful work to fit them into their places. They chafe the ankles excessively, and evidently give much pain. As they are put on when very young, the calf is not allowed to develop, and the consequence is, that when grown up the legs remain at a uniform thickness from ankle to knee—more attenuated alike, in fact. The weight of this armour varies according to the wealth of the parties, up to thirty pounds. Besides the iron wire, great quantities of beads and iron chains are disposed in various ways round the neck.

Such, then, were the people that now greeted Moran, who, being a novice, had to suffer a good deal of chaff from both sexes. He was, however, soon initiated into the mysteries of a warrior kraal, and had seen a bit of life. The strictest diet imaginable was the rule. He had to be content with absolutely nothing but meat and milk. Tobacco or snuff, beer or spirits, vegetable food of all kinds, even the flesh of all animals except cattle, sheep, and goats, were alike eschewed. To eat any of these articles was to be degraded—to lose caste; to be offered them was to be insulted in the deepest manner. As if these rules were not strict enough, he must needs not be seen eating meat in the kraal, neither must he take it along with milk. Six many days were devoted entirely to the drinking of raw milk, and then, when carnivorous longings came over him, he had to retire with a bullock to a lonely place in the forest, accompanied by some of his comrades, and a Dinka to act as cook. Having scrupulously made certain that there was no trace of milk left on their stomachs by partaking of an extremely powerful purgative, they killed the bullock either with a blow from a rungu or by stabbing it in the back of the neck. They then

6:Thomson K-3 (1883-1884)1887
F'L12 Masai F'L12

opened a vein and drank the blood fresh from the animal. This proceeding of our voracious young friends was a wise though repulsive one, as the blood thus drunk provided the salts so necessary in the human economy; for the Masai do not partake of any salt in its common form. This sanguinary draught concluded, they proceeded to gorge themselves on the flesh, eating from morning till night—and keeping their cook steadily at work. The half-dozen men were quite able to dispose of the entire animal in a few days, and then they returned to the kraal to receive the milk diet.

If they lived an exotic life in the matter of food, they could not be said to do so in other ways. Life in the warriors' kraal, as may easily be conceived, was promiscuous in a remarkable degree. They may, indeed, be described as a colony of free lovers. Curiously enough the "requisiteur" system was largely in vogue, though no one confined his or her attentions to one only. Each girl, in fact, had several sweethearts, and, what is still stranger, this seemed to give rise to no jealousies. The most perfect equality prevailed between the Dikis and Elmoruns, and in their savage circumstances it was really pleasant to see how common it was for a young girl to wander about the camp with her arm round the waist of a stalwart warrior.

Till a war-raid was planned, Mowa, our interesting protégé, found he had nothing to do but make acquaintances and amuse himself with the girls. His cattle were looked after by some poor menials, and though the kraal was stationed near a dangerous neighbour, yet no fighting took place. It was, however, a rule in the warrior kraals that no force for protection was allowed, hence the utmost vigilance had to be exercised. Mowa then in the course of his duty had frequently to act as watch. At other times he practised various military evolutions, and he kept up his morale by the peculiar mode of dancing described in the Tuwan chapter. Unlike sugar tellus, they led what might be called a solemn life. They had no rollicking fun, no moonlight dancing, no lively songs, no thundering drums. No musical instrument whatsoever enlivened the Masai life, and their songs were entirely confined to such occasions as the return home from a successful raid, or the invention of the deity. As soon as darkness fell upon the land the guard was appointed, the cattle milked, and everything hushed up in silence.

Shortly after joining the kraal, Mowa was called upon to record his vote in the election of a *Laiyon* and a *Laguenani*.

As only those candidates who belong to a given village may be circumcised on its own village, it is seldom that there is more than one circumcised at a time, but should there be two or three candidates belonging to a single village they would be circumcised together on the same day at the same time. There is no elaborate ceremonial accompanying the operation or preparatory to it. A boy will continue herding his cattle until the late afternoon of the day before that fixed for his circumcision. He is then invited back to the village and has his hair shaved off by his mother, and has new sandals and a new skin dress given to him. This dress must be made of the skins of four goats sewn together, and will be worn the following day during the operation. The actual operation takes place next day, either early in the morning or in the middle of the day. If it is in the morning, the cattle are kept in the yard until the ceremony is over, but if it is in the middle of the day the cattle must be brought into the yard and kept there during the ceremony, for it is absolutely essential that the cattle shall be in their enclosure during the whole of the ceremony. Sheep and goats are not included in this rule. The boy (or boys) sits on an ox-skin in the courtyard in front of his mother's hut wearing his new skin dress and a cloth, and the operator performs the operation with a special small knife without any elaborate ceremonial. The boy then retires to his hut to convalesce. A fat ram is killed for the patient, who is fed on meat boiled in fat and on plain cold fat, "so that he may get well quickly." After about five or six days the other boys in the district who have already been circumcised and have recovered, call for the boy, and he joins their band for the period of their novitiate.

The Novitiate.—The period of novitiateship varies in length of time, as a boy must remain in the novice stage from the time that he is circumcised until every other candidate has been circumcised too. Usually a period of about two years elapses between the time of the last existing ceremony and the time when the last candidate has been operated upon. Then the group undergoes the last existing ceremony which marks their transfer from the novice stage to the senior stage; thus, the last boy to be circumcised may only have a few weeks in the novice stage, while others may be about two years in their stage. During the novitiate, there are certain rules and regulations which must be observed by the novices. They wander about the country in bands armed with bows and bird-arrows visiting more especially those villages where they have their lady candidates have just been circumcised, and collecting skins to their groups. During the whole novitiate period the novices must not cut their hair at all, nor may they indulge in any form of sexual intercourse, nor may they eat eggs, but only ghee for all their lordly. They are required to sleep as many hours as they can, and to rise early and wash their naughty with ghee, and to dress in their hair as a decoration. Men and women alike are allowed to kiss their lovers on the cheek or lip, until at length a boy has a complete wig of matted hair about. Certain birds must on no account be eaten, namely birds such as pigeons, doves, and

[illegible] A. E. B. Lambert.—Some Notes on the Ritual of Kenya Colony.

[illegible] attached to the members to along with them. In fact, we may say that for the girls are the whole before puberty and continue (with as much period of sexual prohibition as the boys have during the similar stage) until they are initiated. There is one important restriction, however, as far as the girls are concerned, and that is that sexual intercourse with married men is entirely prohibited before initiation, and is considered a very serious offence.

[illegible] *Menstruation.*—Menstruation is not looked upon as causing uncleanness, and there are no special rules and regulations attached to this condition, but, on the other hand, during the actual menstrual period a girl should refrain all activities in doing with men or boys. There is no restriction of work during the menstrual period as there is among some Bantu tribes, but a girl or woman must wash her hands before milking if she is menstruating.

[illegible] *Conception.*—There is a general belief (as already mentioned) that conception can only take place if there has been full sexual intercourse during the five or six days immediately following the menstrual period, and although there is no special teaching about this, girls grow up with this knowledge and take care not to allow full intercourse during the five days immediately following menstruation. Occasionally, of course, a girl does allow sexual intercourse at this time, either because she is excited away by sexual desire, or because she deliberately wishes to conceive for some reason or another (see Wanderbook). In the former case she will try to bring about abortion.

[illegible] *Abortion.*—If a girl finds that she has conceived and wishes to induce abortion she reads for the man whom she considers responsible and tells him about it, and he is bound to help her.

As long as her condition has not been discovered by her parents she may try to induce abortion, but as soon as her condition is known to her parents she must no longer try to do so. Abortion is brought about by means of a stick of special wood which can only be obtained from a medicine man. This stick is inserted into the vaginal passage and is said to be an absolutely certain abortifacient. This is the only method used.

[illegible] *Penalty for Conception.*—If an unmarried girl conceives and her condition becomes known she must immediately be initiated. In the normal way (see below) her initiation would take place at her mother's home and the necessary arrangements would be made by her father, but if she is to be initiated because she is with child the onus of all the arrangements is shifted on to the man who is responsible for the girl's condition, and the ceremony must take place at the man's village. This does not, however, mean that the man will have to marry her because of this, but he may do so should both parties desire it. His only work the man amongst for her initiation and pay all the costs of the ceremony, but he must also give one heifer and a quantity of beer to the girl's father, [illegible] because he has prevented the latter

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from having the honour of the host of her initiation." Should the man decide to marry the girl, this latter is counted as one of those which must be handed over for the marriage transaction (see Marriage).

Girls' Initiation — Among the Kisii girls are initiated singly and not in groups, nor are they initiated until a good many years after puberty, for as soon as a girl is initiated she must be married, and ceases to have any intercourse with the members of boys. Except under the circumstances described above, a girl is not initiated until her breasts begin to droop to a marked extent. As soon as this is noticeable, her mother informs the father, who makes the necessary arrangements. If the girl's mother is living at the time of a marriage with one of her sons, then the girl's initiation will take place at the marriage, otherwise it will take place at the home village. The essential point is that initiation must take place in the mother's hut (or in the hut of another of her father's wives, should her own mother be dead). The father comes to the place when the day of the ceremony has been fixed and here is prepared. A man called *Abikhyatha* or daughters' father before the actual operation or just after it. This is the "man for childbearing" and is supposed to insure fertility. This man is eaten by all those present at the ceremony. The actual operation is performed by an old woman, who is a skilled operator (she may be either a Mosori or a Muntiri), and the girl sits on a stool (with the hut during the operation. The operation is said to be the same as that used by the Kikuyu on their girls, and this is a form of circumcision, but exact details cannot be obtained from the men. As soon as the operation is over the operator makes the girl to "choose her of the blood spilt" and a man is then slaughtered and given to the operator. This man is called *Amogusi*. Such a man is called *ombori ebisimbaria* to provide meat and fat for the girl during convalescence.

Shaving Ceremony — Finally after the girl is healed and before she can go to her husband's village, a man is killed called *Abomeri*, which is the "man for the shaving," and at the same time the girl's head is shaved by her mother.

Part V — Marriage

Exogamy — Marriage is always exogamous as far as sub-clans are concerned, but marriage within the main clan is allowed. This rule not only applies to marriage but to all forms of sexual intercourse. So men, whether they be, married or unmarried, may at any time ever have sexual intercourse with any women, girl or child of his own sub-clan. This is the strictest rule of all Kisii sex regulations, and the penalty for any breach of this rule is very severe indeed (see below).

A woman remains a member of her own sub-clan even after marriage, but her children belong to the sub-clan of her husband.

Betrothal — Amongst the Kisii there are two usual methods of betrothal :—

(1) Betrothal of unborn children.
(2) Betrothal of infant girls.

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[illegible] The method of betrothing an unborn child is as follows — A man or boy wishing to do so seeks a pregnant woman (secretly, of course, that her husband is not of the same sub-clan), and goes to her and assists her on the stomach either with fat or with red ochre mixed with water oil. By so doing he pledges that if the child born is a girl he will eventually marry her. Should the child be a boy he is bound to it in friendship for life. In the event of the child being a girl he must, from birth onwards, present the child with small gifts from time to time, and as the girl grows up supply her with such necessaries or ornaments as she may demand from him. A man or boy wishing to betroth himself to an infant girl does so simply by giving the child a necklace, and from then on he must supply her with such ornaments as she may require. Of course a man must live at all events that the child — whether unborn or an infant — is not already betrothed. A man may cancel a betrothal if he wishes to do so (but he cannot break the pledge of friendship with a boy in the case of a boy being born to a woman whom he assisted when she was pregnant), and the father of a girl may cancel betrothal by refunding to child any items of the suitor's loss. If a girl, as she grows up, decides that she does not wish to marry the man to whom she is betrothed, she can easily avoid doing so by arranging with one of her lovers to have intercourse with her just after menstruation, and thereby conceiving. She then has the option of marrying this lover should he be willing.

[illegible] Normal Marriage (as a Free Virgin). — It is clear from the above description of betrothal that it is unlikely that a girl will reach her time for initiation unbetrothed. Should she do so by any chance, her father would at once make every effort to find her a husband, probably from among the older men who already have several wives. For could the girl object to any step, for to be initiated and not be married directly afterwards would make her the laughing stock of all the neighbourhood. When a girl is to be the first wife of a man, it usually means that her husband-to-be is still a member of a warrior group. This, of course, means that he cannot in the normal way live with his wife for some time. This fact, however, in no way interferes with the marriage ceremony and consummation, the presence of the husband not being considered in any way necessary.

[illegible] The respective fathers of the girl and of the man make all the arrangements and ceremonies when the girl is initiated (see below), and as soon as these have been concluded, and the girl has recovered from the operation and been through the shaving ceremony, she goes to the village of her husband's family, where she has already built herself a hut (or had a hut built for her by her friends).

As a married woman her main duty in life now is to bear children, just as it was her duty before initiation to avoid conception. If her husband is still in the warrior class and away, therefore, not having sexual intercourse with her, this is no hindrance to her in performing this duty, as she may now have intercourse with any married man of sub-class other than her own.

An initial share, Ol Pimo names a livestock. I have been given a reason for the use of this term, but was not convinced of its truth. The elders of the Ol Pimo generation stand in a particular position of guardians to their juniors who recognize their authority to a far greater extent than they do that of elders of other generations. This relationship has considerable political as well as domestic importance.

Manyattas.—The unit is the unit for a single manyatta, except when the whole age-group of a single area combine to form one manyatta for some ceremony, e.g. the *E-Unoto*.

For some years the policy of Government was directed towards suppressing the manyatta system, and manyattas were prohibited, each warrior being supposed to live in his father's village. With increasing control and understanding of the tribe this rule has been somewhat relaxed, and the warriors are now commonly allowed to have manyattas provided that they continue to behave themselves before the law.

But the general effect of Government policy has profoundly modified the original customs with regard to manyattas, and it is now rather difficult at times to know exactly what they were. The main political effect is that warriorhood lasts for a much shorter period than formerly, and most men marry and become elders within four or five years of their circumcision.

Nowadays the parents are somewhat unwilling that the girls should live in the manyattas, and as there are only a few of these to be seen there.

A manyatta usually differs structurally from an elder's village in that it is simply a circle of huts without the usual thorn hedge round it.

Sec. 2(2).—The word written by Mr. Leakey translates would perhaps best be spelt as two words *Pandit Ipuli*. *Pandit* is a second person singular imperative of a dative word (see Stiffe, p. 77) which I have never heard except as described by Mr. Leakey. *Ipuli* means "ox" or "ox".

When a man has been accepted by a girl who has been so addressed he usually holds out his hand to her with the tips of his forefinger and thumb touching to form a circle. She in turn supposed to touch this circle so formed with her forefinger. This is regarded as making her acceptance binding.

It is a great disgrace for a warrior to cause an uncircumcised girl to conceive, and he must kill an enemy in order to wipe it out. This is, in fact, the usual reason for the occasional murders of people of other tribes, frequently ascribed erroneously to a desire on the part of the murderers to "shed his spear."

The E-Unoto Ceremony.—Nowadays this takes place from three to five years after initiation. It is not a single ceremony for the whole of the Moran, but there are a number of separate ceremonies according to the groups concerned in any age-group with whom

498 D. Seroma Fox.—*Further Notes on the Rites of Kenya Colony.*

The Eshe and Ekia E'Unoto ceremony took place in July, 1930, and lasted three days. They invited me to it, but, owing to pressure of political work, I was unable to arrive till the morning of the third day at about 10 a.m. (P). XIII, Figs. 1-5, and P). XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

The Masai definition of the E'Unoto is as follows:—

"The E'Unoto is a religious ceremony of blessing of the age-group, after which the warriors have leave to marry.

"The O-Kiapire gives the warriors permission to have sexual relations with initiated women."

The warriors were dancing on the kraal (P). XIII, Figs. 1 and 2). After about an hour they went off to a spot about a mile away in the forest, where I was informed that they sacrificed a buffalo as a sheep.* They returned about 5.30 p.m., about twenty of them being dressed in a manner similar to that of the three headmasters (P). XIII, Fig. 3). They danced round the O-Kiapire hut, and those warriors who were entitled to enter it let their hair-line up to where mine now hung on it. The warriors then squatted down in a close group in the centre of the manyatta, while some elders walked round them drinking honey-wine and spraying it out of their mouths over the group as a blessing. Others of the elders sat by the O-Kiapire hut and refreshed themselves with honey-wine. It was at this point of the proceedings that the age-group of warriors was named *Iremirie* (from rock-rabbit shoot). This terminated the festival.

The chief headmaster is the O-Oiwan, but I cannot say what part he takes, having arrived so near the end of the ceremony. He is held in great reverence for many attributes, and it is unlucky for the age-group if a sickly child kills him. He must not take part in political affairs. He is always spoken of as O-Oiwan, and his son, when he grows up, is known as the son of O-Oiwan. (P). XIII, Fig. 5.)

There is a minor official called O-Odoi-ngidon. *Ngidon* is a thong of leather. (I say spelling of the first part of the title is correct; it would perhaps mean "He who splits the thong." But there are several words from which it might derive, and I have no knowledge of his duties to assist me in checking my spelling of the name.

O-Kiapire (Pl'kiapire).—Being ignorant of E'Masai I had been assisted by the most prior to reading Mr. Leakey's article. (2) The Eshe E'Unoto is one built just within the eastern edge of the village. The village consisted of a circle of huts about 600 yards in diameter. I looked in to the O-Kiapire, but it was too dark to see anything. It was made of cow-dung plaster like an ordinary hut, but was much bigger. Ranged against the wall outside were the heads of numerous cows which the warriors had slaughtered.

I was informed that NO of the warriors had not had sexual relations with initiated women and might therefore enter the O-Kiapire. After the E'Unoto the

* Masai, Publishing's the general word for a sheep.

warriors may have sexual relations with initiated women. This is regarded as being the first stage in a warrior becoming an elder.

The warriors have their heads shaved—usually by their mothers—at the close of the E'unoto ceremony, but they allow the hair to grow again, and plait it into a pig-tail when long enough.

Milk Drinking by Warriors.—A warrior may not drink milk unless it is handed him by another of his age-group. They must therefore always go about in parties of two or more. The procedure on arrival at a village where they must cause milk is as follows :—

The warriors enter the village and stand in the open space within the circle of the huts (*il*) and as many of the old men come to greet them. They ask for a hut of their age-group, or, failing that, a hut of an elder of their (*i*) Firm. On being shown a hut to enter they go in and sit down on a bed or the stool, and each (*il*) milk is handed to one of them (*for description of hut see p. 460 ff.*). He shakes up the milk, removes the cap of the gourd, and hands it to his companion, who drinks it. If only two guard is brought they share it, handing it from one to the other. If a second guard is brought the warrior to whom the first guard was originally handed may open it and drink it himself provided that he has given the first guard to his companion. Drinking after a friend of milk is a sign of rejection and is good manners, showing the guest's appreciation of the hospitality of his host.

O-Ry'ulor of Milk.—This ceremony is performed by each warrior individually. He is given milk by an elder in his mother's hut, and drinks it by himself. He shaves his head and then not grow a pigtail again. Thereafter he may drink milk by himself. He usually marries very soon after this ceremony, and is no more regarded as a warrior after it. The ceremony usually takes place somedays a year or two after the E'unoto owing to Government policy of reducing the period of warriorhood as much as possible. In the Purko, most of the *Il-Sidimoi* have already performed their milk *O-Ry'ulor*, although there is as yet no left hand age-group for their generation.

I have heard it said that in some tribes there is a ceremony of handing over warriorhood from one generation to a junior one. Among the Maasai there was no such ceremony. When the young warriors of a new generation became strong enough they fought and defeated the old men, taking on the warriorhood by force.

Their Feasts.—No man may eat meat which has been touched by an initiated woman until he has performed the second *O-Ry'ulor* ceremony, called the *O-Ry'ulor of meat*. After that he may eat meat which a woman has touched if he likes. The *Il Bororosi* and *Il Kitoip* age-groups of the Purko were said to be going to have their meat *O-Ry'ulor* in June, 1930 ; but I left Africa before it was due, and therefore cannot describe the ceremony.

A man of the generation immediately older than the warriors must not be seen eating or drinking milk by a warrior until one of the warrior age has given him a bullet.

12: Fan G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL.12 Masai FL.12
Kenya

Marriage.—The warriors may not marry till after the *E-U'nate*, and do not usually do so till after their first *O-Ki'nabor*. The case stated by Mr. Leakey,[1] in which a warrior cannot have sexual intercourse with his initiated wife, is therefore hypothetical, and does not occur in practice.

The cattle required for the bride-price are payable on the birth of the first child, and cannot be reclaimed if the wife dies or runs away, because the husband has got the child. Wives live with their husbands, but they are common to their husband's generation, not his own exclusively. Thus if a stranger comes to a village where lives a man of his generation he may choose in which hut belonging to his generation he will sleep. When it is time to sleep it is the custom for the owner of the hut to vacate it and leave the stranger with his wife. It is quite lawful and proper for the stranger to have sexual intercourse with the woman provided that she consents and that the restrictions (see p. 392) are observed. It is said that if a woman is persistently unwilling to allow the members of her husband's generation to have intercourse with her she may be severely admonished, and her husband may be fined a number of cattle.

On the other hand, the members of one generation are extremely jealous of generations older or younger than themselves. A fight between generations is very likely to occur if the men of one generation find that a man of another has had intercourse with one of their women.

If a woman who has borne children leaves her husband and lives apart from him, he waits till his eldest son is old enough, and then sends him to fetch her back.

A man may not have sexual intercourse with the wife of his full brother (mother's son), but may have it with the wife of a half-brother (same father, different mother) who is of his generation. He may not have intercourse with his wife's sister or half-sister.

A husband and wife may not call each other by their names.

Father-in-law
Mother-in-law
Son-in-law
Daughter-in-law
} Must not be addressed by name.

Family.—The name for a family is *Ol Mawi*. Relationship is not recognized beyond first cousin. The Masai take little interest in their genealogies and can seldom trace their ancestry beyond the fourth generation. Nevertheless, if a man is of pure Masai descent, *Ol Masainé aimet*, he is proud of the fact.

Death and Burial.—Dead bodies are disposed of by the hyænas, except for those of *Laibons* or very influential old men. These are buried under cairns of stones.

[1] See p. 392 of this volume.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

553 852 and three old men. If it has not previously received a name, it may have been called by the name of its father's father; but at the naming ceremony it receives a name which may be that of its father or a name not connected with any relative. People are also given nicknames referring to their physical or other peculiarities. 551 There is much uncertainty about Masai names; but every man has a patronymic, consisting of *O-le*, " son of," preceding his father's name; this he appears to assume after circumcision. Girls after circumcision may be referred to as *E-se*, " daughter of," preceding their fathers' name. At marriage, the husband gives his wife a new name. The practice of teknonymy is a regular feature. Before the circumcision of his eldest son, a man becomes known as " the father of " So-and-so, i.e., if his son is called Sendeu, he becomes Menye Sendeu, his wife similarly becomes Nyoto Sendeu, the mother of Sendeu.

551 768 The name of a dead child, woman, or warrior is not spoken again, and if the name is an ordinary word, that word is no longer used by the family. Thus, if a man called Ol-ereana, " the gentle one," died, on his death the word *ereana* would be replaced in his family by some such word as *pulpul*, " smooth."

Circumcision (E-murata)

881 304 [171] Boys' circumcision ceremonies take place at intervals of about three years, and the circumcision "period is " open " for about four years. Though the operation may be performed on boys singly or in small groups, the whole number of those circumcised at the same time throughout Masailand forms an associating group corresponding in some degree to the Nandi *mat* (see pp. 31 and 49). Judging by the published accounts, circumcision was a much less prolonged and ceremonious affair than among the Nandi. Before a boy can be circumcised, the father must submit to what is called *en-polosata e-nito*, " the passing of the fever." After making honey-wine, he stays alone in a small hut outside his kraal, dressed as a warrior. After four days, some elders bring him back to his kraal, where he is told to remove the warrior's clothes and become an old man. His son may then be circumcised.

Circumcision begins with the shaving and bathing of the initiate; in the afternoon after this has been done an ox or sheep is killed and eaten by the warriors and elders of the neighbourhood. On the second day, the boy eats a tree called at [824] this time *e-lotim*," which the girls of the kraal carry to the door of the hut [in which the boy sleeps?], where it is planted. On the third morning the boy gets up early and sits outside to get cold; after sunrise he is circumcised, the operator being often a Dorobo. From the fourth to the seventh day he remains at home, and then goes out, shooting with blunted arrows at the girls, and with other arrows at small birds [894 which he wears hung from his head. This is his occupation till he has recovered; 292] during this time he is known as *o-ngodoi* and wears the dress of a married woman, including the *i-suratia* cut-rings, and an ostrich-feather on his head. After recovery he is shaved, given weapons and warrior's clothes, and becomes *al-barnoti*, " the shaved one," i.e., a junior warrior. Till his kraal company forms its *manyata*, he lives at home.

Girls undergo the operation of clitoridectomy in preparation for marriage. There are no special times for this. An ox or sheep is killed before the operation. During the period of recovery they are known as *e-ngodoi*, and wear on their heads a wreath of the Hyphaene palm, *ol-meirinia*, or of grass, instead of an ostrich feather.

Age-sets

561 Unlike the cyclic age-sets of the Nandi division, those of the Masai are of linear type, that is, they do not work in recurring cycles and do not come into existence till they are required. Nevertheless, it is clear from the lists of Krapf (1854), Hollis (1905), and Fosbrooke (1948), as well as from the Tavetta age-sets (Hollis, 1901), that some at least of the names are fixed and recur. In 1939 the names Il-Kisale

* *Zizyphus mauritiana*; normally called *l-chai-chai*.

class name, and is sliced with the short (or proximal) group, the first being the right hand grade and the other being the left hand grade. After several years the junior warriors go through another ceremony and become full warriors. Their total period of warrior duty may be about 15 years. The warriors are distinguished by their hair style and spear.

The hair style involves a complicated plaiting of the hair with some combination of cords, pieces of bits or gut, hair, or sticks all liberally plastered with sheep or cow fat and red ochre. Elliott (1968) has detailed the attitude and materials used and variations in style between areas.

The warriors' spear is often over five feet long. It has a long, narrow, double-edged blade, an equally long but round and pointed tail, and between them a very short wooden hand grip serving as a shaft. Warriors also carry a flat, double-bladed long knife or short sword called a *simi*. These useful weapons are carried at the waist in a red leather sheath. Originally the metal weapons were produced by metal-working tribes. They now come from England and the first thing a warrior does after buying a spear or simi is to file off the brand name. When in ceremonial dress or at war the